

***PSEUDOTSUGA MENZIESII* / *HOLODISCUS DISCOLOR* -  
*SYMPHORICARPOS ALBUS***

Douglas-fir / oceanspray - common snowberry  
Abbreviated Name: PSME/HODI-SYAL

Sample size = 8 plots

**DISTRIBUTION:** Occurs in the Olympic Mountains rainshadow, including San Juan and portions of Skagit, Island, and Clallam counties. May very rarely occur elsewhere in the Puget Trough.

**GLOBAL/STATE STATUS:** G1S1. Small global range. Very few occurrences of relatively good quality remain (7 are known). Most examples have been altered by past timber harvest or fragmentation.

**ID TIPS:** Dominated by Douglas-fir, with little to no western hemlock, western redcedar, or grand fir present. Understory dominated by oceanspray and common snowberry. Baldhip rose usually prominent, western fescue usually present, beaked hazelnut absent. Sword fern less than 5% cover.

**ENVIRONMENT:** These sites are moderately dry and appear to be medium to rich in relative nutrient status. Parent materials include glacial till, sedimentary residuum, and reworked glacial drift and marine sediment. Soils are often mapped as complexes with rock outcrop, but outcrops do not usually occur on plots representing this type. All sites have gentle to moderate slopes. Appears to occur exclusively in dry climatic areas (Olympic Mountains rainshadow).

**Precipitation:** 20-40 inches (mean 30)

**Elevation:** 50-650 feet

**Aspect/slope:** all/ 10-35% slope (mean 20)

**Slope position:** short, upper, mid, ridgetop, lower

**Soil series:** Pickett, Roche, Cassolary, Terbies, rough stony land

**DISTURBANCE/SUCCESSION:** In the pre-Western settlement landscape, a moderate-severity fire regime likely prevailed (variable severity, intermediate frequency), probably resulting in more open stands on average. Douglas-fir regeneration occurs under a variety of conditions. More shade-tolerant conifers are largely absent and do not appear capable of becoming important in late-seral stands under present conditions. On some islands, heavy deer browsing on deciduous shrubs probably prevents the development of this association.

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**Vegetation Composition Table (selected species):**

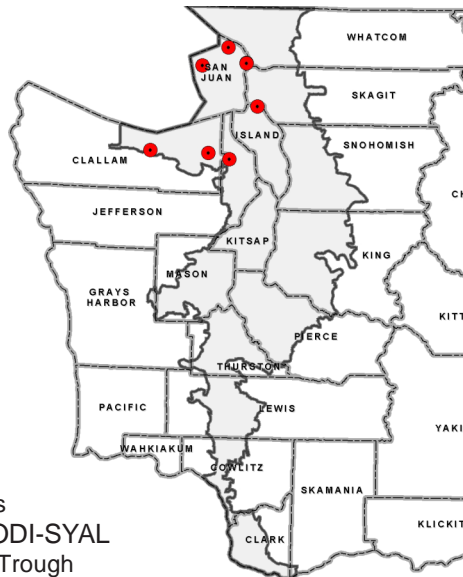
Con = constancy, the percent of plots within which each species was found;  
Cov = cover, the mean crown cover of the species in plots where it was found

Trees	Kartesz 2005 Name	Con	Cov
Douglas-fir	Pseudotsuga menziesii var. menziesii	100	64
Pacific madrone	Arbutus menziesii	25	6
western redcedar	Thuja plicata	25	2
grand fir	Abies grandis	13	3
western hemlock	Tsuga heterophylla	13	+
<b>Shrubs and Dwarf-shrubs</b>			
oceanspray	Holodiscus discolor	100	49
common snowberry	Symphoricarpos albus var. laevigatus	100	21
baldhip rose	Rosa gymnocarpa	88	12
trailing blackberry	Rubus ursinus var. macropetalus	88	4
orange honeysuckle	Lonicera ciliosa	63	5
tall Oregongrape	Mahonia aquifolium	63	2
dwarf Oregongrape	Mahonia nervosa	50	2
serviceberry	Amelanchier alnifolia	38	7
Rocky Mountain maple	Acer glabrum var. douglasii	25	11
Nootka rose	Rosa nutkana	25	6
spreading snowberry	Symphoricarpos hesperius	25	6
coast black gooseberry	Ribes divaricatum	25	3
<b>Graminoids</b>			
western fescue	Festuca occidentalis	88	3
Columbia brome	Bromus vulgaris	75	8
Alaska oniongrass	Melica subulata	75	6
Coast Range fescue	Festuca subuliflora	38	1
<b>Forbs and Ferns</b>			
cleavers	Galium aparine	88	7
western starflower	Trientalis borealis ssp. latifolia	88	3
sword fern	Polystichum munitum	75	2
mountain sweet-cicely	Osmorhiza berteroi	63	1
yerba buena	Clinopodium douglasii	50	7
woods strawberry	Fragaria vesca ssp. bracteata	50	4
Pacific sanicle	Sanicula crassicaulis var. crassicaulis	50	2
Nuttall's peavine	Lathyrus nevadensis ssp. lanceolatus var. pilosellus	38	5
licorice fern	Polypodium glycyrrhiza	38	1

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Chris Chappell photo



Plot locations  
of PSME/HODI-SYAL  
in the Puget Trough

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**VEGETATION:** Forest or woodland dominated by Douglas-fir. Grand fir or western redcedar are occasionally present in small amounts, mainly as regeneration. Pacific madrone is occasionally prominent. A dense, relatively tall, deciduous shrub layer is typical with oceanspray dominating. Common snowberry is always at least prominent to, more often, co-dominant. Baldhip rose is always present and usually prominent to co-dominant. Rocky Mountain maple is occasionally prominent. Trailing blackberry, tall Oregongrape, and orange honeysuckle are other frequent woody plants. The herb layer can be relatively diverse and includes frequent occurrence of western fescue, Columbia brome, Alaska oniongrass, cleavers, western starflower, mountain sweet-cicely, sword fern, yerba buena, woods strawberry, and Pacific sanicle.

**CLASSIFICATION NOTES:** This association was described as PSME/SYAL from Sucia Island (Fonda and Bernardi 1976) and as PSME/SYAL-HODI Chappell (1997). NatureServe (1995) name is PSME/SYAL-HODI, soon to be PSME/HODI-SYAL. This association was considered part of PSME-(ABGR)/SYAL-HODI association in the Fort Lewis classification (Chappell 2001).

**MANAGEMENT NOTES:** Stands that have not been previously harvested, especially mature and old-growth, should be considered for conservation status. Sites that have already been harvested may be well suited to uneven-aged management.

Chappell, C.B. 2006. Upland plant associations of the Puget Trough ecoregion, Washington. Washington Department of Natural Resources, Natural Heritage Program, Olympia, WA. [<http://www.dnr.wa.gov/nhp/refdesk/communities/pdf/intro.pdf>].